

Georgia National Guard

Technician Handbook

Integrity First...

Service Before Self...

Excellence in All We Do!



GA DoD Human Resources Office
“People First, Mission Always!”

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GEORGIA NATIONAL GUARD

TECHNICIAN HANDBOOK

Published for GA DoD Supervisors and Technician Members

By:

The Georgia Department of Defense
Human Resources Office (HRO)

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FOREWORD

This Technician Handbook is intended to guide and assist you in answering many of your questions involving working conditions and benefits. It is designed to serve as a quick reference resource. The Handbook outlines procedures that are generally applicable, but detailed procedures may vary. We have noted, in most cases, the source material, such as Title 5 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), National Guard Bureau Technician Personnel Regulations (NGB TPR) and Georgia National Guard Human Resource Regulations (GA HRR).

This Handbook contains a number of topics, each covering a significant Human Resource area. Many topics are divided into subtopics containing more detailed information.

Unit topics were suggested by focus groups consisting of Technicians, Managers, and Supervisors from the Air Guard and the Army Guard. The topics covered are not totally inclusive; therefore, we welcome your ideas regarding additional subjects and/or modifications.

This Handbook was developed in partnership with the Association of Civilian Technicians, Inc. and is intended to compliment, rather than replace, the current negotiated agreement. If there is a difference in language between the agreement and this Handbook, the negotiated agreement language will prevail.

I wish to express my personal thanks and appreciation to the HRO staff and all who have assisted in writing this Technician Handbook through focus groups, comments and discussions.



DAVID B. POYTHRESS
Lieutenant General, GA ANG
The Adjutant General

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THE NATIONAL GUARD: PROTECTING AMERICA

The National Guard has served to protect America—nation, state and community—since its origin as a militia in 1636. Most recently, guard members responded to Operation Allied Force in the Balkans, forest fires in the Northwest, and severe flooding in the mid-west. Throughout the nation's history, the National Guard has been the primary backup force



for the active armed forces and the community-based force for local, state, or national disturbances and disasters. From the time of our Founding Fathers, who provided in

the Constitution for organizing, equipping, manning, training, and calling of the militia, to the most recent modification of call-up authority under section 673 of Title 10 U.S.C., members of the National Guard, or militia, have been available and ready to respond to any level of assistance required to protect or defend their neighbors or their country.

The Georgia National Guard is 264 years old, dating its founding to General James Oglethorpe's organization of the colony in 1733. These first Georgia militiamen defended the colony in 1742 at the Battle of Bloody Marsh. Formal establishment of a Georgia militia came in April, 1751, when the Board of Trustees provided for a colonial militia. All landowners of 300 or more acres constituted the militia cavalry, with all others serving as foot soldiers. In battles both within the borders of this nation—from the Revolution, through the Seminole Indian Wars to the Civil War—and outside in conflicts including the Spanish American War, World Wars I and II, Georgia Guard members have been there. More recently our experience has been in the Persian Gulf War, Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

The concept of an organized and trained militia, available to support a small active federal force, has been the guiding defense policy of this country since its inception. That concept has served us well when it has been followed by doubling the size of our Army just prior to World War II, and by augmenting the active forces with key units and individuals in the continuing war on terrorism and other regional conflicts around the world.

The realities of changing national priorities and limited national resources will almost certainly lead to a requirement to again embrace our historic reliance on a large “militia” force.

Beginning with the provisional Rules and Regulations of 1776, every constitution in the state's history has formally designated the governor as “commander-in-chief” of the state militia. In 1792, the position of adjutant general was created by an act of the General Assembly and designated as second to the governor in direct command of the militia.

In 1951, the General Assembly established the Department of Public Defense. Four years later, the name was changed to Department of Defense, and the militia of the state reorganized into an “organized” and “unorganized” militia. All able-bodied male residents of the state between the ages of 17 and 45 who are not serving in any force of the organized militia are assigned to the unorganized militia. The organized militia is composed of the Army National Guard, the Air National Guard, and the State Defense Force. Adoption of the name “National Guard” came with an act of the Georgia General Assembly in 1905.

The Adjutant General is the executive head of the Georgia Department of Defense (GA DoD). The Adjutant General also serves as chief of staff to the Governor for military affairs in the state. Should the Governor or his successor be unable to perform the duties of commander-in-chief, The Adjutant General assumes command of the National Guard.



The Georgia Department of Defense has a dual function. It contributes to the national defense by maintaining ready National Guard military forces subject to active duty on the call of the President. GA DoD also protects the safety of Georgians in event of disaster, riot, violence, or imminent danger (when ordered by the Governor). The Department consists of two divisions, the Military Division and the Administrative Services Division. The Military Division consists of the Army National Guard, the Air National Guard, and the State Defense Force. The Administrative Services Division provides support services to the Office of The Adjutant General and the Military Division.

Our service to the state and community includes . . .

- Disaster and Civil Disturbance Responses
- Counterdrug Operations—Supporting state and local authorities in Georgia's war on drugs
- Youth Challenge—Giving high school dropouts another opportunity to succeed
- Civil Action Projects—Adding value to local communities while providing valuable engineer training
- 4th WMD – CST – Providing highly trained personnel and sophisticated resources to identify, access and facilitate federal assistance for any threat that may involve WMD.



The Georgia National Guard has units in . . .

- 72 of Georgia's 159 counties
- 57 of Georgia's 150 House districts
- 39 of Georgia's 56 State Senatorial districts
- All of Georgia's 11 Congressional districts

By the Numbers, Strength:

Army National Guard	9,350
Air National Guard	2,900
Armories	62

Funding:

Federal	\$264.2 million
State	\$7.9 million

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MERIT PROMOTION AND PLACEMENT

Promotions in the Georgia National Guard are based on a system of merit. Vacant positions are announced with the required knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA's) stated in the announcement. Applications are invited from all interested eligible applicants. Basic qualifications are determined and applicants are then ranked according to the degree to which they meet each of the KSA's, and other merit requirements. A list of qualified applicants is then presented to the Selecting Official for interview and selection.

The quality of an applicant's responses to KSA's and information contained in the application will help determine whether he or she is among the best-qualified candidates for the job. Therefore, it is important that applicants carefully prepare and submit complete and accurate information for job consideration.

UPWARD MOBILITY

The Upward Mobility Program is intended to meet current and projected staffing needs by designing and managing positions to enable high potential technicians to enter career fields that will permit them to develop commensurate with their potential. Technicians selected for this program will be reassigned to transition positions that will prepare them through on-the-job and formalized training to enter target positions. Individual training plans will be developed for technicians competitively selected for upward mobility positions at less than the full performance level. The training plan will be designed to assure the technician receives the formal education, classroom training, and/or experience required to fully qualify for the target position. Selection of technicians for this program is restricted to technicians below grade GS-9 (and Federal Wage System equivalent) who are in positions that do not enable them to realize their full work potential.

Selection will be made using the KSAs required for the position. Each element is evaluated based on the technician's potential to perform the target job. To inquire about upward mobility opportunities, contact the Personnel Staffing Specialist in HRO.

Reference HRR 335

TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The Georgia National Guard has a strong commitment to developing the talents, skills, and abilities of its technicians. The Government Employees Training Act, PL 85-507, emphasizes that training is a responsibility of the government and that training is necessary and desirable. Once you are employed, you will receive the training you need to perform your job. This may range from on-the-job developmental assignments to formal classroom instruction. Your supervisor is responsible for working with you to determine your training needs.



An essential part of career development is the Individual Development Plan (IDP). An IDP is a developmental action plan that structures training and development based on your duties and responsibilities. It details training activities designed to meet established goals and objectives. The development of an IDP takes many factors into consideration, including your present skill level, your potential, your goals, and the needs of the agency. Your supervisor will work with you to prepare your IDP.

Reference HRR 400; NGB TPR 400; 5 CFR, Part 410

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is a program designed to protect the basic civil rights of Federal employees in the workplace. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, as amended, established the premise of this important program.

The EEO Program is a vital part of the overall mission of the Georgia National Guard. It is the goal of the Georgia National Guard to guarantee each man and woman, military and civilian, equal opportunity for entry and advancement in the National Guard in an environment free from discrimination, bias, and sexual harassment.

The Guard strictly prohibits discrimination in employment because of race, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment), national origin, politics, marital status, sexual orientation, physical handicaps, age, or any other irrelevant factor. This policy applies to, and is an integral part of, every aspect of personnel policy and practice in employment, development, advancement, and treatment of technicians. Supervisors are required to apply the principles of equal employment in selecting personnel for employment, promotion, recognition, and training.

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

Diversity Management in the Georgia National Guard is developing an organizational culture that accepts and values human differences and similarities and the positive contribution they can bring to our organization. It is about understanding the human environment and appreciating the gender, race, culture, and ethnic variations of our workforce.



SEXUAL HARASSMENT / SEXUAL ASSAULT

The official Department of Defense definition of sexual harassment, applicable to both military and civilian personnel, is as follows:

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature when

- a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's job, pay, career, or

- b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person, or
- c) such conduct interferes with an individual's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

The National Guard policy on sexual harassment is clear and unequivocal: All National Guard personnel are entitled to a work environment free from sexual harassment. Eliminating sexual harassment in the National Guard is both an individual and a corporate responsibility at every level of supervision and command. Simply stated, the Guard policy is zero tolerance.

Immediate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee engaging in sexual harassment. Such action may include suspension, demotion, or discharge.

Questions regarding this policy should be addressed to the State Equal Employment Manager (SEEM).

Members, who believe they are the victim of Sexual Assault, rather than sexual harassment, should contact their unit victim advocate (UVA), or sexual assault response coordinator (SARC) for assistance.

*Reference Title 29, CFR, Part 1614
NGR (AR) 690-600
NGR (AF) 40-1614
EEO MD-110*

EEO COUNSELORS

The EEO Counselor is responsible for providing an open channel through which technicians and management can raise questions, discuss problems, get answers, and resolve incidents of alleged discrimination quickly and on an informal basis at the local level. The counselor is available to counsel anyone who believes he/she has been discriminated against. The counselor determines basic issues in the complaint, conducts interviews, researches regulations, and gathers and

analyzes data. If the complaint is not settled informally, the counselor advises the complainant about formal complaint procedures.

All EEO Counselors have formal training in their counselor duties and will insure that your complaint is resolved or further processed in accordance with current procedures. A list of EEO Counselors is available from the SEEM (State Equal Employment Manager).

EEO COMPLAINTS

Complaints of discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or physical or mental handicap are processed under a separate system designed to assure prompt, fair, and impartial consideration. If you feel you have been discriminated against in connection with your employment, you should present your complaint initially to an EEO Counselor within 45 calendar days of the incident giving rise to the complaint; or, if it is a personnel action, within 45 calendar days of the effective date. Military discrimination complaints must be submitted in writing within 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination.

Questions regarding the EEO rights of technicians, the procedures to be followed, and the selection of a counselor, should be addressed to the State Equal Employment Manager (SEEM). Questions concerning military discrimination complaints should be directed to the EEO Advisor, Military Equal Opportunity Officer (MEO-Air or HR/EO-Army), or SEEM. Addresses and telephone numbers for these individuals are available through the SEEM.

*Reference Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964
NGR (AR) 690-600/NGR (AF) 40-1614
NGR (AR) 600-22/NGR (AF) 30-3
EEO MD-110*

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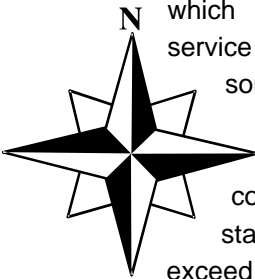


Highlights

- Most appointments are excepted
- One year probationary/trial period
- Classification
- Work Schedules

TYPES OF APPOINTMENTS

The majority of appointments are made to the *excepted* service. Excepted service appointments consist of those civil service positions, which are specifically excepted from the competitive service by statute, the President, or the U. S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM).



The GA DoD has approximately 52 permanent competitive positions and the ability to hire non-dual status employees non-competitively for a period not to exceed two-years under the Department of Defense emergency hiring authority currently in effect.

A small number of technicians are on *temporary indefinite appointments*. These are temporary appointments with no time limit and may, if advertised with conversion potential, be converted to permanent appointments non-competitively. *Temporary not-to-exceed appointments* are those appointments used to fill short-term employment needs for a specified period of time, generally less than one-year.

CLASSIFICATION

The classification process may impact on a number of different aspects of your career, including advancement opportunities, pay, training, upward mobility, and other personnel programs.

The grade of your job is determined by the application of job-grading standards or position classification standards.

Your position description lists the major duties and responsibilities required of your position. Your position description has already been *classified* – a position classification specialist has reviewed the description of the assignment, compared it with job-grading standards and made a determination as to the appropriate pay plan, title, occupational series, and grade level. Your job standards, assigned by your supervisor, are on file in the Human Resources Office and are available for your review.

If you disagree with the classification of your position, you may want to consider a classification appeal. You should first ask for a position review. This will give the classifier an opportunity to review the position and render a decision based on the most current information. If you disagree with this finding, you may file a classification appeal. HRO can advise you on the levels of appeal and the procedures for submitting an appeal. It should be noted, however, that three things can happen as a result of a classification appeal:

1. the position can be upgraded;
2. the position can retain the present grade level; or
3. the position can be downgraded.

TRIAL (PROBATIONARY) PERIOD

All National Guard technicians who must maintain military membership as a condition of employment are appointed in the excepted service and must serve a one year trial (probationary) period.

During the trial period, an employee may be released from employment without right of appeal or labor organization grievance if, in management's opinion, the employee is not suitable for continued federal service.

WORK SCHEDULES

Technicians in the Georgia National Guard perform work in accordance with the current TAG GA DoD Workweek policy which currently allows Commanders the flexibility to establish appropriate work schedules to best accomplish the mission while maintaining the core hours M-F/0800-1630.



REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

In the event of unscheduled absence, technicians will notify the first line supervisor as soon as possible after the beginning of the workday. If the first line supervisor is not available, technicians will notify higher level supervisor(s) as necessary. Every effort should be made to contact a responsible supervisor rather than leaving voicemail or messages.

Tardiness and absences from duty of less than one hour may be excused by the supervisor if there is good cause. If not excused, these absences will be charged to appropriate leave such as compensatory time, annual leave, or LWOP. Unauthorized absences or tardiness may become the basis for disciplinary action.

GRADE INVERSION

Military grade inversion applies only to technicians in the excepted service. Situations of inversion of military rank are not permitted. The military grade of the full-time supervisor or work leader must equal or exceed the military grade of the technician personnel supervised.

MILITARY COMPATIBILITY

All technicians who are required to be members of the National Guard should be assigned to a military position and unit that is compatible with their full-time technician job. Specific records of applicability are maintained by the Staffing Specialist in HRO and are included in each technician vacancy announcement.

WEARING OF THE UNIFORM

Technicians are responsible for reporting to work on time and in proper attire, i.e. proper military uniform for excepted service technicians or proper business attire for competitive technicians. The military uniform as designated by the applicable command will be worn in accordance with governing AR/ARNG or AF/ANG regulations. This includes observing customs and courtesies associated with the wearing of the uniform. It also may include the wearing of chemical warfare gear, etc., if the mission or command requirements dictate.

Reference HRR 335 and NGB TPR 335



HOLIDAYS

The Federal government is closed in observance of the following holidays. Only technicians in a pay status will be paid on these days.

<i>New Year's Day</i>	<i>January 1st</i>
<i>Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday</i>	<i>3rd Monday in January</i>
<i>President's Day</i>	<i>3rd Monday in February</i>
<i>Memorial Day</i>	<i>Last Monday in May</i>
<i>Independence Day</i>	<i>July 4th</i>
<i>Labor Day</i>	<i>1st Monday in September</i>
<i>Columbus Day</i>	<i>2nd Monday in October</i>
<i>Veteran's Day</i>	<i>November 11th</i>
<i>Thanksgiving Day</i>	<i>4th Thursday in November</i>
<i>Christmas Day</i>	<i>December 25th</i>

Suggested work schedules and holiday schedules are published annually by the GA DOD Human Resources Office. Work performed on a holiday is subject to holiday pay should be pre-approved by your supervisor prior to performing the duty

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFITS

In order to enroll for health insurance benefits, you must submit Standard Form 2809, *Health Benefits Registration*, within 31 days of your *entry-on-duty* date, or the date you first become eligible to enroll.

If you fail to elect a health insurance plan within 31 days of becoming eligible, you must wait until the next *Open Season* period to apply for health benefits.



The government shares the cost of health coverage for technicians who have permanent or indefinite technician appointments.

Eligibility is based on your appointment and work schedule. Generally speaking, all permanent technicians with regularly scheduled tours of duty are eligible for the FEHB program. Participation is voluntary, and you may cancel your enrollment at any time.

BASIC FEHB PROGRAM FEATURES:

- Choice of plans and options
- Government contribution toward the cost of your premium
- Payments by payroll deduction
- Immediate coverage from the effective date of enrollment without a medical examination or restrictions based on your age or preexisting condition
- An opportunity to temporarily continue group coverage or to convert to non-group coverage if your enrollment ends or a covered family member loses his/her eligibility
- Continued protection for you and eligible family members after your retirement, and for eligible family members after your death, if certain conditions are met
- A technician in Leave Without Pay status may continue FEHB coverage up to one year. Employee is required to pay contributions at the same rate in a duty status.

Note: A technician in LWOP on Military Active duty for other than a named contingency operation duty may receive coverage up to two years with regular contributions. Please see the end of this section for information concerning benefits available during periods of mobilization for named contingency operations (i.e. Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, etc.).

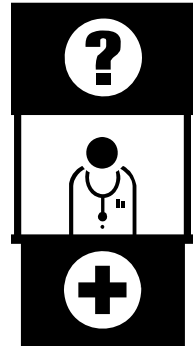
TYPES OF PLANS:

Fee-for-Service Plans:

These plans reimburse you or the health care provider for covered services. If you enroll in one of these plans, you may choose your own physician, hospital, and other health care providers. The plans include the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan and plans sponsored by unions and employee organizations.

Prepaid Plans:

These are the Comprehensive Medical Plans (CMP's) and Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO's) that provide or arrange for health care by designated plan physicians, hospitals, and other providers in particular locations. CMP's and HMO's pay all providers through salaries or other payment arrangements. You pay any required cost-sharing amounts.



WHO IS COVERED:

- Self-only enrollment provides benefits just for you.
- Self and Family enrollment provides benefits for you, your spouse, and your dependent unmarried children under 22 years of age.
- A disabled child who is 22 years of age or older may be eligible for coverage if you have adequate medical certification of a mental or physical handicap that existed before his or her twenty-second birthday. Contact HRO/ERS for details.

FEHB PROGRAM FOR TEMPORARY TECHNICIANS:

If you have a temporary full-time or part-time appointment and you complete one year of current continuous employment, you are eligible to enroll in the FEHB program. You pay both the employee and the government share of the premium.

Note: Be sure you carefully review all available health insurance plans and decide which plan is best for you and your family. Various circumstances such as marriage, divorce, or the birth of a child will allow you to change your enrollment at times other than Open Season. Contact HRO/ERS for complete information.

5CFR, PART 890

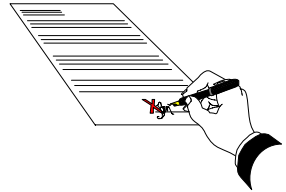
FEDERAL EMPLOYEES GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

- All permanent technicians with regularly scheduled tours of duty are eligible to enroll in the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Program. You are automatically covered for Basic Life unless you waive this coverage.
- You must submit Standard Form 2817, *Federal Employees Group Life Insurance*, to indicate the type of coverage you want or to waive basic coverage.
- If you are eligible for basic coverage, you may select additional options by submitting Standard Form 2817 within 31 days of becoming eligible.
- Eligibility is based on your appointment and work schedule.
- The government pays one-third of the cost of your Basic Life insurance. Coverage continues for up to one year in a non-pay status.

- Technicians on Leave Without Pay (LWOP), to include Military Active duty, will continue to be covered for a period not to exceed one year (No premiums are required).

COVERAGE: FEGLI offers basic life coverage and a variety of additional options. Contact HRO/ERS for additional information.

Basic Life: Basic Life coverage is equal to the actual rate of annual basic pay (rounded to the next \$1000) plus \$2000, or an amount of \$10,000, whichever is greater.



Note: You must elect Basic Life to be eligible for the Options. You pay the full amount of any Optional Insurance you elect.

Option A-Standard: Additional \$10,000 life insurance and \$10,000 accidental death and dismemberment insurance.

Option B-Additional: You can choose additional life insurance coverage equal to one, two, three, four, or five times the actual rate of annual basic pay (after basic pay is rounded to the next \$1000).

Option C-Family: Spouse: \$5,000 increment life insurance coverage. Each dependent child: \$2,500 increment life insurance coverage. A technician may choose from one to five increments of family coverage.

CONTINUATION OF COVERAGE: For information on continuation of life insurance coverage when you are on active duty or LWOP, contact HRO/ERS.

Reference 5CFR, Parts 870-874

TECHNICIAN DISABILITY INSURANCE

Disability insurance is available to technicians employed in the Georgia National Guard. Benefits are provided for non-job-related injuries or illness after 30 days in a non-work status. The Federal Government does not sponsor this coverage. You may Contact HRO/ERS for additional information.

RETIREMENT

There are two Federal employee retirement plans:

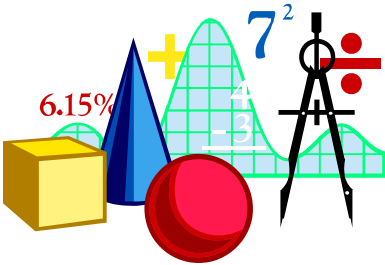
- Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)
- Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)

FERS

FERS provides benefits from three different sources: a Basic Benefit Annuity, Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), and Social Security. This plan took effect on January 1, 1984. Prior to January 1, 1984, Federal employees were eligible for coverage under the CSRS retirement plan.

BASIC BENEFIT ANNUITY: The first part of FERS is the Basic Benefit Annuity. To be eligible to receive your retirement benefits from the Basic Benefit Annuity, you must have 5 years of creditable service.

THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP): The TSP is the second tier of the FERS retirement package. It is a special tax deferred savings plan for Federal employees. TSP participation is voluntary. Employees may participate at any time during their employment. As always, HRO encourages maximum participation at the earliest possible opportunity to help achieve excellent retirement results!



After becoming eligible to participate, a TSP account will be opened in your name, and your account will begin receiving an automatic contribution from the Federal government equal to 1 percent of your rate of pay. You may then elect to make additional (and tax deferred) contributions to your TSP account. You can save up to the IRS stated maximum for retirement contributions, and the government will make additional matching contributions up to 5 percent of your rate of pay.

You will be able to invest in one or more of five funds, each representing a different rate of return and a different risk factor. These funds are:

G Fund:	Government Securities Investments
C Fund:	Common Stock Index Investments
F Fund:	Fixed Income Index Investments
S Fund:	Small Stock Index Investments
I Fund:	International Stock Index Investments
L Funds:	Retirement Horizon Auto-Managed Funds (i.e. L 2020 / L 2030 / L 2040, etc.)

Contribution percentages are requested using a TSP-1 form submitted to the HRO. Once enrolled in TSP, contribution allocations between the available funds may be changed via the TSP website: <http://www.tsp.gov>

The money you contribute to the plan, up to the IRS maximum for any given tax year, and the matching government contribution in excess of the automatic one percent, is always your own. The government's one-percent contribution becomes yours after 3 years of Federal service. You can borrow from your contributions to buy a primary residence, to meet educational and medical expenses, or other reasons. You can transfer your TSP funds to an IRA or other qualified pension fund if you leave Federal service before retirement (when you have at least 5 years Federal service, you may choose to place your funds into an immediate or deferred retirement benefit if you leave before you retire). Once an employee separates from either the uniformed services, or the Federal civilian service, the employee will be able to combine the TSP accounts by contacting the TSP Service Office (see TSP Bulletin 02-7, "TSP Participation of Individuals Who Return to Civilian Service or Pay Status Following Military Service" on the TSP website).

RETROACTIVE TSP CONTRIBUTIONS: While separated or on leave without pay (other than certain military LWOP) no contributions can be made to TSP. However, when a technician is restored or returned to technician duty status, from Military active duty, they are entitled to make retroactive contributions to TSP to cover the active duty period.

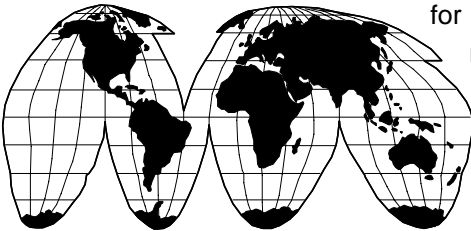
SOCIAL SECURITY: The third part of FERS is Social Security. Social Security is paid by your contributions and matching contributions from the government. If you are new to Federal service, you are automatically covered by Social Security, regardless of your work schedule.

Under FERS, Social Security benefit payments are provided to you and your dependents if you qualify under the Old-Age Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI) programs of the Social Security Act. OASDI replaces a portion of your earnings lost as the result of retirement, disability, or death (most employees are also covered under Social Security's Medicare Hospital Insurance program. This pays a portion of hospital expenses incurred if you are receiving Social Security disability benefits or retirement benefits at age 65 or older).

For more information about Social Security, including how to apply for benefits and detailed eligibility rules, contact your nearest Social Security Office. The address and phone number are listed in the public telephone directory. The website for Social Security is: <http://www.ssa.gov>

CSRS

This is a single benefit retirement plan. Most employees hired before January 1, 1984 are covered by CSRS. This plan is funded by employee and government contributions. Your pension is determined by the number of years in the plan and your rate of pay. Employees are eligible for retirement as soon as they reach age 55 and have 30 years of credited service; or at age 60 with 20 years; or at age 62 with 5 years of service.



You can increase your monthly retirement income by saving your sick leave. Under CSRS, unused sick leave cannot be used for eligibility for retirement but can be added to your creditable service when your annuity is computed, once you are eligible for retirement. For example, if you are age 55 and have 30 years of service and 2087 hours of accrued sick leave, you will have 31 years of service for annuity computation. This amounts to a 2 percent increase in your annual annuity.

If you have accrued less than 2087 hour of sick leave, the hours will be prorated and added for computation purposes (notify HRO to determine the amount of your accrual).

Another important part of your retirement is cost-of-living adjustments (COLA's). The amount of the COLA is determined by comparing the Consumer Price Index for the third calendar quarter of the current year with the same calendar quarter of the preceding year. Under CSRS, the resulting percentage will be applied to the retirement annuity, effective December 1, and payable in the January retirement check (these dates are subject to change by Congress).

Upon retirement, you will also receive a *lump sum* payment for all annual leave accrued during the current leave year. You can receive credit for annual leave carried over from previous years provided it does not exceed 240 hours. The lump sum payment is paid at the rate of pay you are earning on the date of your retirement.

If you are eligible to receive both a civil service retirement pension and a Social Security benefit, your Social Security benefit will probably be reduced by the *Windfall Elimination Provision*. This provision provides for the elimination of "windfall" Social Security benefits for retired workers whose primary employment was not covered by Social Security. A different formula is used in computing a Federal worker's Social Security benefit resulting in a lower benefit amount. While your Social Security benefit is based on your total earnings under Social Security, the Windfall Provision will reduce your monthly benefit depending on the number of covered quarters. Typically, the reduction will be from \$150 to \$200 per month. You can ask your local Social Security representative to calculate the "windfall" impact on your benefit.

Note: The TSP option is available to employees covered only by CSRS. As with FERS, this gives CSRS employees the option to save extra money and receive an immediate tax break. For 2005, CSRS employees may contribute up to 10 percent of their base salary. There are no matching contributions made to CSRS employees' accounts by the government. All other conditions are as stated for FERS-covered employees.

RETROACTIVE TSP CONTRIBUTIONS: While separated or on leave without pay no contributions can be made to TSP. However, when a technician is restored or returned to technician duty status from Military active duty, they are entitled to make retroactive contributions to TSP to cover the active duty period.

CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM OFFSET: The Social Security Amendments of 1983 provided that all employees first hired by the Federal government after December 31, 1983, be covered by Social Security. This also applied to former employees rehired after December 31, 1983, who experienced a break in service of more than 365 calendar days. This resulted in the creation of the CSRS Offset Plan.

Participants in the CSRS Offset Plan are those employees who had 5 or more years of covered CSRS service performed prior to January 1, 1987; had a break in service exceeding 365 calendar days; and were rehired following that break in service, after December 31, 1983.

Offset employees have the choice of remaining in the Offset Plan or transferring to FERS. Employees have 6 months from the date of rehire to make the transfer decision. If the employee chooses to transfer to FERS, that decision is irrevocable even if the employee leaves Federal service and later returns.

Employees in the Offset Plan must pay the Social Security tax plus a small contribution to the CSRS fund. The total cost to the employee in the Offset Plan is, in most cases, identical to the regular CSRS employee's cost.

Offset employees pay a reduced CSRS contribution because they also pay Social Security taxes. Therefore, Offset employee benefits come from both CSRS and Social Security once the employee is eligible for Social Security. The CSRS reduction is designed so that Offset employees receive both CSRS and Social Security benefits that are approximately equal to the benefits the employees would receive if they had been covered only under CSRS.

Since Offset Plan employees are basically CSRS employees, they receive a CSRS annuity from the time they retire until age 62, at which time they may become eligible for Social Security. If ineligible for Social Security at age 62, Offset retirees continue to receive their full CSRS benefits. However, if they are eligible for Social Security at age 62, the CSRS annuity is reduced to *offset* that part of the employees' government pension that reflects years of Federal service subject to the Offset Plan. If you have any questions about the Offset, please contact HRO/ERS.

CREDITABLE MILITARY SERVICE FOR CSRS AND FERS RETIREMENT:

FERS – a deposit of 3% of Military taxable earnings is required in order to receive credit for civilian retirement purposes.

CSRS - a deposit of 7% of Military taxable earnings is required to receive credit for civilian retirement purpose.

Creditable military service includes most Title 10 military service and most Title 32 military service if the Title 32 military service interrupted a period of technician service. See HRO/ERS for eligibility – you will need a copy of your DD-214, or a copy of the active duty orders certified by the applicable Commander.

Interest will accrue on the required Military deposits three years after first employed or the performance of military duty, whichever is later.

Reference 5 CFR 831, 870-874

MILITARY ACTIVATION EFFECT ON TECHNICIAN BENEFITS:

On October 13, 1994, Congress passed the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), expanding the rights of employees entering uniformed services and giving employees options related to their employment and benefits. Federal civilian employees who are members of the Uniformed Services and who are called to active duty (or volunteer for active duty) are entitled to job protection as well as continuation of certain benefits and entitlements.

PAY

Employees performing active military duty will receive compensation from the Armed Forces in accordance with the terms and conditions of their military enlistment or commission. They will not receive any compensation from their civilian employing agency unless they elect to use military leave, annual leave, compensatory time or time-off award. Employees will automatically receive their pay-adjustments and within grade increases while in a non-pay status performing active military service.

Remember that accrued compensatory time and time-off awards will be forfeited after 26 pay-periods; therefore it is a good idea to schedule this leave first!

MILITARY LEAVE BENEFITS

Employees who perform active military duty may request paid military leave, as specified in 5 U.S.C 6323(a). Under the law, an eligible full-time employee accrues 120 hours of military leave each fiscal year. In addition, an employee may carry over up to 120 hours of unused military leave from one fiscal year to the next, for a maximum military leave benefit of 240 hours in a fiscal year. Any unused military leave in excess of 240 hours will be forfeited at the beginning of the next fiscal year. Employees who elect to use military leave will receive full compensation from their civilian position for each hour charged to military leave, in addition to their military pay for the same period.

Employees who perform active military duty may be granted an additional 22 days of military leave under 5 U.S.C. 6323 (b) if such leave is granted for the purpose of providing military aid to assist domestic civilian authorities to enforce the law or protect life and property or for contingency operations. Employees who perform active military duty may also be granted 44 days military leave under 5 U.S.C. 6323 (d) if such leave is granted for the purpose of participating in operations outside the United States, its territories and possessions.

Note: Neither the 22-day provision nor the 44-day provision are dual compensation!

EFFECTS ON OTHER LEAVE TYPES

Annual Leave: Employees who perform active military duty may request the use of accrued and accumulated annual leave to their credit (under 5 U.S.C. 6303 and 6304), and such requests must be granted by the supervisor. Employees who use annual leave will receive compensation from their civilian position for all hours charged to annual leave in addition to their military pay for the same period.

Compensatory Leave: Employees who perform active military duty may request the use of accrued and accumulated compensatory leave to their credit and such request must be granted by the supervisor. Employees who use compensatory leave will receive compensation from their civilian position for all hours charged to compensatory leave in addition to their military pay for the same period. The employee will lose compensatory time entitlement if not used within 26 pay-periods.

Time-Off Awards: Employees who perform active military duty may request the use of time-off awards and the accumulated time-off awards leave to their credit and such request must be granted by the supervisor. Employees who use these awards will receive compensation from their civilian position for all hours charged to awards in addition to their military pay for the same period. The employee will lose the award entitlement if not used within 26 pay-periods. Employees can not receive any award while in non-pay status.

Leave Without Pay (LWOP): The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) generally requires an agency to place an employee entering the military on LWOP-US unless the employee chooses to be placed on military leave, annual leave, or other approved leave status as appropriate, or the employee requests to be separated. Full-time employees do not earn annual or sick leave in a pay period in which they have accumulated 80 hours of LWOP. In addition, part-time employees on LWOP also earn less annual and sick leave, since they earn leave based on the number of hours in a pay status.

RETURN TO CIVILIAN DUTY

Under USERRA, an employee, who enters active military duty (voluntarily or involuntarily) from any position (including a temporary position) generally has full job protection for a period of five years (cumulative active duty time requiring LWOP-US status), provided he or she applies for reemployment within the following time limits:

- a) Employees, who served less than 31 days must report back to work at the beginning of the next scheduled workday following their release from service and the expiration of 8 hours after a time for safe transportation back to the employee's residence.
- b) Employees, who served more than 30 days, but less than 181 days, must apply for reemployment within 14 days of release by the military.
- c) Employees, who served more than 180 days, have 90 days to apply for reemployment.

Generally, employees who served less than 91 days must be restored to the position for which qualified that they would have attained had their employment not been interrupted. Employees who served more than 90 days have essentially the same rights, except that the agency has the option of placing an employee in a position, for which they qualify, that is of like seniority, status and pay. Upon return or restoration, an employee generally is entitled to be treated as though he or she had never left for purposes of rights and benefits based upon length of service.

An employee performing active military duty is protected from reduction in force (RIF) and may not be discharged from employment for a period of 1 year following separation (6 months in the case of a Guard Member called to active duty under 10 U.S.C. 12304 for more than 30 days, but less than 181 days, or ordered to an initial period of active duty for training of not less than 12 consecutive weeks), except for poor performance or conduct or for suitability reasons.

RETIREMENT/DISABILITY/DEATH BENEFITS

Retirement: An employee who requests LWOP while performing active military duty and is covered under CSRS (Civil Service Retirement System) or FERS (Federal Employees Retirement System) continues to be covered by that retirement system. If an employee separates to perform active military duty, he or she would generally receive retirement credit for the period of separation when they exercise restoration rights to their civilian position. If the separated employee does not exercise his or her restoration rights, but later re-enters Federal civilian service, the military service may be credited under the retirement system, subject to the rules governing credit for military service.

Deposit to Retirement System: Upon eventual retirement from civilian service, the period of military service is creditable under either CSRS or FERS, subject to the rules for crediting military service. To avoid interest payments, it is generally in the employee's best interest to inquire about making a deposit to CSRS or FERS immediately upon return to duty in the civilian position. If the military deposit is paid before the interest accrual date (within 3 years of returning to a position covered by CSRS or FERS) no interest is charged on the military deposit. The deposit would equal the lesser of 1) 7% for CSRS or 3% for FERS of the military basic pay OR 2) 7% for CSRS or .8% for FERS of the civilian pay.

Disability Benefits: If the employee becomes disabled for his or her civilian position during the LWOP and has the minimum amount of civilian service necessary for title to disability benefits (5 years for CSRS, 18 months for FERS), the employee is entitled to apply for disability benefits under the retirement law.

Death Benefits: Death benefits payable under the civilian retirement systems will continue during to apply for periods of LWOP for employees covered under CSRS OR FERS.

TSP SAVINGS/LOAN EFFECTS

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP): No contributions can be made to the TSP while on LWOP or if separated from the civilian position. However, if the employee is restored to his/her civilian position, retroactive contributions and TSP elections may be made to cover that period of service. Employees interested in making retroactive contributions must contact HRO. Employees should be aware that the amount of money they can contribute retroactively to their civilian accounts may be offset by any contributions made to their uniformed services TSP account while on active duty. FERS employees are entitled to receive matching funds based on contributions made from military pay while activated, if the employee is restored to his or her civilian position.

TSP Loans: If you had a TSP loan for which payments were suspended because you entered non-pay status to perform military service, HRO will resume your loan payments when you return to pay status. Uniformed services accounts are maintained separately from civilian accounts.

LIFE INSURANCE CONTINUATION

Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI): Employees enrolled in FEGLI who separate or are placed on LWOP to perform active duty service continue to be covered by the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) for up to 12 months at no cost to the employee. At the end of the 12 months in a non-pay status, the coverage terminates, but is re-instated when the employee returns to duty. If a Federal civilian employee with FEGLI is called-up to active military duty and dies, death benefits are payable to the employee's beneficiaries. Accidental death and dismemberment benefits are also payable under Basic insurance (and Option A, if the employee had that coverage) unless the employee was in actual combat at the time. Accidental death benefits are in addition to regular death benefits. Even if accidental death benefits are not payable, regular death benefits are payable. The Office of Federal Employees Group Life Insurance determines all payments and individually reviews any claim that may be questionable. You can go to <http://www.opm.gov/insure/life> for more information.

HEALTH BENEFITS EFFECTS

Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB): Employees who are covered by the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB) and are either separated or placed in a LWOP status to perform military service may continue to be covered by FEHB for up to 24 months (if placed on active duty for more than 30 days), unless the employee elects in writing to have the enrollment terminated. If the employee chooses to continue the FEHB, and the employee has been called to active duty under Title 10 in support of a contingency operation, the agency will pay the employee share of the premium. If the employee's military service is not in support of a contingency operation, they are responsible for paying the employee share of the premium for the first 12 months and 102% for the final 12 months of continued coverage. During the first 12 months, employees may pay currently (generally with after-tax monies) or incur a debt to be paid upon their return (generally on a pre-tax basis if the employee participates in premium conversion). The cost for the final 12 months must be paid currently. There is no provision under FEHB regulations, to continue coverage beyond 24 months.

Uniformed Service for 30 Days or Less: When an employee enters one of the uniformed services for 30 days or less, the FEHB enrollment will continue without change. Withholdings for the employee's share of the premium and government contributions will also continue, as long the employee remains in a pay status or until the military orders are changed to a period of duty for more than 30 days.

Uniformed Service for More than 30 Days: Employees who terminate their FEHB coverage due to LWOP-US or Separation-US are immediately eligible for FEHB coverage upon their return or restoration to duty. Employees must complete an SF 2809 to reenroll in FEHB within 60 days of the return or restoration to the Federal civilian position.

Termination of FEHB Coverage: At the end of the 24 months, FEHB coverage terminates. Typically, FEHB coverage must terminate following 24 months in a LWOP status. Because USERRA limits FEHB coverage to 24 months the full premium payment (for those who meet eligibility) cannot exceed 24 months.

Employees get a free 31 day extension of coverage during which they can convert to a non-group policy. (These employees are not eligible for Temporary Continuation of Coverage-TCC). Termination is not considered a break in coverage for purposes of meeting the 5-year/first opportunity requirement to continue FEHB into retirement.

Because active duty service members and their families are entitled to medical care under the military health care system employees serving on active duty and their families will not be without health coverage following a termination of FEHB at the end of the 24 month maximum period of continued coverage.

FEHB eligibility will automatically be reinstated upon return to duty in the civilian position or upon restoration to a civilian position under the provisions of USERRA.

Eligibility requirements for the Full Agency Premium Payment: To be eligible for agency payment of the employee's share of the FEHB premium, the employee must meet all of the following requirements:

- a) Be enrolled in FEHB and elect to continue that enrollment.
- b) Be a member of The National Guard.
- c) Be called or ordered to active duty (voluntarily or involuntarily) in support of a contingency operation as defined in section 101(a)(13) of title 10, United States Code.
- d) Be placed on leave without pay or separated from service to perform active duty.
- e) Serve on active duty for a period of more than 30 consecutive days. (Section 519, 2002 National Defense Authorization Act)
- f) The statutory authority listed on the orders must be section 12301(a), 12302, or 12304 of title 10, United States Code.
- g) The orders must state that the duty is in support of one of the contingencies/operations specifically identified below and the statutory authority is a provision of title 10, United States Code

Members of the Army National Guard or Air National Guard ordered to active duty under title 32, United States Code, or any provision of state, territorial, or District of Columbia code are not eligible.

TRANSITIONAL TRICARE BENEFITS: You may be eligible for transitional TRICARE benefits coverage for a period of 180 days after release from active duty. If you wish to waive reinstatement of your FEHB coverage to use the transitional TRICARE coverage, you will need to sign the “Waiver of FEHB Reinstatement” provided by HRO. If you waive immediate reinstatement of your FEHB coverage, it is your responsibility to contact HRO when transitional TRICARE ends so that you can enroll in FEHB again. Your FEHB coverage will be effective at the beginning of the pay period after you notify HRO.

DESIGNATED CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS: The current contingencies and operations that are included in each are provided below. Due to mission changes, this list may change over time.

<u>Contingency</u>	<u>Authority</u>	<u>Effective date</u>	<u>Status</u>
Bosnia	Executive Order 12982	December 8, 1995	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation Joint Endeavor • Operation Joint Guard • Operation Joint Forge 			
Iraqi Crisis	Executive Order 13076	February 24, 1998	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation Southern Watch • Operation Northern Watch • Operation Desert Spring • Operation Desert Thunder • Operation Desert Fox • Operation Desert Falcon • Operation Desert Focus 			
Kosovo	Executive Order 13120	April 27, 1999	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation Allied Force • Operation Joint Guardian 			
911 Terror Attacks	Executive Order 13223	September 14, 2001	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation Enduring Freedom • Operation Infinite Justice • Operation Iraqi Freedom • Operation Noble Eagle 			

PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE UPON RETURN FROM DEPLOYMENT

Employees who are activated for military duty in connection with Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom or any other military operation subsequently established under Executive Order 13223, is entitled to the equivalent of one (1) administrative workweek not to exceed forty (40) hours of excused absence, regardless of the length of the military activation. This is a one-time entitlement. Each employee is entitled to receive only forty (40) hours of excused absence, regardless of the number of activations. Multiple periods of active duty under this authority does not entitle employees to additional periods of excused absence. The intent of the President's memorandum is to grant one administrative workweek of paid time off to employees returning to Federal civilian service to aid in their readjustment to civilian life. Therefore, upon receiving notification from an employee on his or her intent to return to civilian duty on a specific date, an agency must grant the employee forty (40) hours of excused absence immediately prior to the employee's actual resumption of his or her duties. This time must be granted consecutively as soon as the employee reports back for Federal civilian duty or notifies the agency of his or her intent to return to civilian duty. This entitlement cannot be used incrementally and cannot be "stockpiled" for use at a later date. Supervisors will use "excused absence" for time and attendance processing.

SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES TO EMPLOYEES

LWOP-MIL Request: Supervisors must submit a SF-52 "Notification of Personnel Action" for all employees who are call to perform active military duty. Supervisors and employees must determine the effective date of leave without pay (LWOP). Once the LWOP effective date has been determined and agree upon, it must be entered in Part B-4 on the SF 52. Supervisors must make sure that all SF 71's are turned into the time and attendance (T&A) record keeper.

Performance Appraisal: It is not necessary to submit a performance appraisal for an employee who is entering active military duty. If a supervisor changes positions while their employee is on LWOP and had at least 120 days to observe the employee performance, they should initiate a close-out appraisal. If not, the technician will not receive an appraisal until the new supervisor has had sufficient time to observe their performance on their return to duty. If an employee has a birth day while on LWOP, they will receive an appraisal once they return to duty.

DEPLOYING EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees entering LWOP-US or Separation-US must complete and sign a copy of the document “GA DOD EMPLOYEE ELECTION CHECKLIST FOR FEDERAL TECHNICIANS ENTERING OR RETURNING FROM MILITARY ACTIVE DUTY” provided by HRO. The employee must also bring their latest Leave and Earning statement (LES) to be able to determine the effective date of LWOP. Employees must coordinate with their supervisor and submit a copy of the individual order that places them in on military active duty in support of a contingency operation to HRO.

Note: It is important to understand that the employee portion of the FEHB premium cannot be paid by the agency until both the employee election form and a copy of the military orders are received.

Upon return from active duty, employees are responsible for notifying their manager/supervisor to initiate an SF-52, Notification of Personnel Action, for Return to Duty, and complete a Return to Duty checklist provided by HRO.

HEALTH CARE OPTIONAL PROGRAMS – FSA/HSA/LTC:

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS (FSA):

A Health Care FSA (HCFSA) pays for the uncovered or unreimbursed portions of qualified medical costs. A Dependent Care FSA (DCFSA) allows you to pay eligible expenses for dependent care with pre-tax dollars. All employee contributions to FSAs are made from pre-tax earnings, thereby increasing disposable income. There are no government contributions to the FSAFEDS program. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has contracted with a third party administrator, SHPS, Inc., to manage the program. Retirees are not eligible to maintain FSAs. If you would like to establish a DCFSA or HCFSA you must do so during Open Season on an annual basis. Account elections will not automatically roll over to future years. An FSA ELECTION IS 100% VOLUNTARY. The FSAFEDS Open Season is held each fall in conjunction with the FEHB Open Season from mid-November to mid-December. Eligible employees may elect up to \$5,000 for a DCFSA and \$4,000 for a HCFSA. The Federal FSA program is a tax-qualified program based on the guidelines in sections 105, 125, and 129 of the Internal Revenue code. To enroll and participate in this program you must visit their website at: <http://www.fsafeds.com>

HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT (HSA):

HSAs are available to members who enroll in an HDHP, are not Medicare enrolled, are not covered by another health plan, or are not claimed as a dependent on someone else's Federal tax return. The health plan credits a portion of the health plan premium to the HSA. The credited amount is different for a Self Only enrollment than for a Self and Family enrollment. You have the option to make additional tax-free contributions to your account, so long as total contributions do not exceed the limits established by law, generally the plan deductible. The funds can be used to pay for your plan deductible and/or qualified medical expenses that do not count towards your deductible. To sign up see the following link:

<http://apps.opm.gov/hsa/>

LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE (LTC):

The Long-Term Care or LTC Security Act of 2000 makes approximately 20 million people eligible to apply for this insurance, including Federal and Postal employees and annuitants, active and retired members of the uniformed services, their qualified relatives and a few other eligible groups. Long term care insurance provided under the Federal Program provides you reimbursement for costs of care when you are unable to perform at least two Activities of Daily Living for an expected period of at least 90 days or when you need constant supervision due to a Severe Cognitive Impairment. The Federal Program will provide reimbursement based on the benefit options and amounts you are approved for. For more details on who is eligible to apply for the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program, click on the link provided. For more information visit the website: <http://www.ltcfeds.com>

Please use the websites above or contact HRO/ERS if you have further FSA / HSA / LTC questions.

FAMILY READINESS

The Georgia National Guard Family Readiness Program is responsible for assisting Georgia National Guard Units, members, and their families during times of need or pre/post mobilization. In addition to Unit Family Readiness Programs, Family Assistance Centers (FAC's) may also be available. The FAC's are established in times of military call-up to provide support and assistance to Service members and their families. They simplify the process of accessing needed services and support for families called to active duty for extended periods. The web address for Family Readiness is:

<http://www.guardfamily.org/> (National Website)

or

http://www.gahro.com/ga_hro_family_readiness.htm (GA DoD)

or

<http://www.georgiaguardsfamily.org> (GA NG Family Support Foundation)

EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE (ESGR)

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), enacted October 1994 and significantly updated October 1996 and 1998, provides job protection and rights of reinstatement to employees who participate in the National Guard and Reserve. If you still have a question about employment rights start by contacting ESGR. This is not only your best option for speedy resolution; it protects all your levels of appeal if they are needed. The web address for ESGR is:

<http://www.esgr.org/> (National Website)

or

http://www.gahro.com/ga_hro_esgr.htm (GA DoD)

BENEFIT WEBSITES:

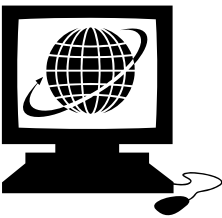
For benefit information available on the World-Wide-Web see:

<http://www.opm.gov> - Office of Personnel Management

<http://www.tsp.gov> - Thrift Savings Plan

<http://www.ssa.gov> - Social Security Administration

<http://mypay.dfas.mil> - DFAS MyPay Website



The above websites can be a valuable resource for current benefit information, pay information, retirement calculators, rates of return, and social security personal benefits and earnings statements (PEBS).

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT LIFE CHANGE EVENTS!

IMPORTANT NOTE: Whenever a technician experiences a significant life change event such as a marriage, divorce, death or adoption, etc. It is extremely important to contact the Human Resources Office to check or change beneficiaries and dependents. It is all too often we hear about tragic scenarios where an intended beneficiary was not the official beneficiary of record! For instance, if a person gets divorced, remarries and is deceased before changing (or forgetting to change) their life and TSP beneficiaries to the current spouse, the divorced spouse (by law) would collect all the benefits and the current spouse could be left with nothing – **DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU!**

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EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) assists any technician who has behavioral problems that affect work performance. This assistance is provided through discrete and confidential referral of technicians to appropriate treatment specialists. Some problems commonly dealt with through EAP include: alcohol and drug abuse, behavioral disorders, excessive stress from adverse family situations, financial difficulty, legal entanglement, or other personal problems that interfere with job performance or health.

Technicians who recognize that such problems might be affecting their job performance may wish to voluntarily seek the program's assistance by contacting the Program Coordinator in HRO. Information concerning such contacts and any subsequent referrals will remain confidential.

While the supervisor or manager is never to be in the role of amateur diagnostician or counselor, he or she may refer a technician to the program when less than satisfactory job performance persists. Performance factors that may indicate the need for referral include: assignment failures, excessive absenteeism or tardiness, unexcused absences, deteriorating personal appearance, altercations with fellow technicians, prolonged lunch hours, frequent disappearances, poor judgment, moodiness, or anxiety.

Job security will not be jeopardized by such referral. Failure by the individual to accept evaluation or to follow through on professional advice will be considered in the same manner as any illness that continues to adversely affect job performance.

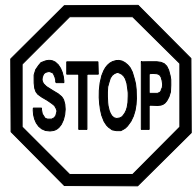
Records will be maintained only in clinic or treatment files in strict confidence, independent of personnel records. The technician must personally authorize release of any medical records.

It is the technician's basic responsibility to maintain satisfactory work performance. If work performance falls below satisfactory for behavioral or medical reasons, it shall be the technician's responsibility to regain and maintain behavioral or medical health consistent with satisfactory job performance. A technician who does not respond to the continued help offered and whose job performance does not improve will be subject to disciplinary action including possible removal.

Reference HRR 792-2

ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE

The use of illegal drugs and excessive use of alcohol are incompatible with membership in the Georgia National Guard.



Use of illegal drugs and excessive use of alcohol adversely affect our combat readiness, health and safety, and morale. These impact significantly on organizational discipline. Unfortunately, 10 percent of our population has either a drug or drinking problem. If you or a fellow employee has a problem with alcohol or drugs, please contact EAP for assistance and get professional assistance. Helping our employees to effectively deal with drug and alcohol problems will make the Georgia Guard a safer and better place to work.



ETHICS AND CONDUCT

Technicians of the Georgia National Guard are expected to maintain high standards of honesty and integrity and to conduct business with customers in an ethical manner. It is not the intent of this publication to list every restriction or requirement imposed by law, regulation, or other proper authorities. Some of the prohibited acts that can result in disciplinary action are:

- Using a government vehicle without authorization
- Misusing official and/or classified information
- Gambling and betting on duty
- Misusing government property: such as, supplies, personal computers, telephones, fax equipment, or intranet/internet
- Using a government-issued travel card for personal use
- Refusing to cooperate in an administrative investigation
- Accepting gifts and favors from subordinates or customers
- Filing fraudulent claims
- Using drugs, alcohol or intoxicants while on duty
- Misusing government postage/mail
- Making false statements
- Engaging in illegal political activity
- Using obscene or vulgar language
- Improper personal relationships
- Any conduct unbecoming a National Guard Technician

5 CFR 735

TPR 752

DoD 5500.7R

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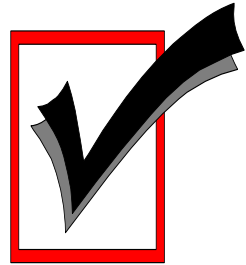


Highlights

- Register and vote
- No political activity in uniform, during duty hours, or on base

YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO REGISTER AND VOTE

Technicians may be excused to vote, normally not to exceed three hours after the polls open to three hours before the polls close, whichever will result in less lost work time. Excused absence for voting will be handled on a case-by-case basis and will not be granted if the technician may reasonably be expected to vote outside of his or her normal duty day.



THE HATCH ACT

The Hatch Act was originally passed to prohibit **all** partisan political activities by Federal employees. It was modified in 1993 to permit some partisan activities. The modification provides for Federal civilian employees to participate voluntarily, the same as private citizens, in limited areas of the partisan political process. It protects the Federal civilian employee from improper political solicitations.

A technician **may** (but not in uniform):

- Act as a recorder or watcher
- Serve as an election judge or clerk

- Drive voters to polling places for a partisan political candidate, group, or party (not in government owned/leased vehicle)
- Join a political party or political group and participate in its activities
- Serve as an officer of a political party
- Attend and participate in nominating caucuses
- Organize a political group
- Participate in political rallies and gatherings
- Display pictures, signs, buttons—off duty, off property

A technician **may not** participate in political activities:

- While on duty or wearing a uniform, badge, insignia, or other similar item that identifies the employing agency or the position of the employee;
- While in any room or building occupied in the discharge of official duties by an individual employed or holding office in the government of the United States or any agency; or
- While using a government-owned/leased vehicle or while using a privately owned vehicle in the discharge of official duties.

Example: Federal employees can solicit, accept, and receive individualized, uncompensated, volunteer services but **not contributions**.

There are exceptions for non-partisan elections. Check with the agency ethics official – the Judge Advocate General (JAG) for additional guidance.

Reference OPM Provisional 734-1, 9/27/94 and DoD 5500.7R



GRIEVANCES

In a working relationship, there will inevitably be disagreement and grievances. It is in the best interest of everyone to settle these differences at the lowest possible level, preferably between the first line supervisor and the employee. If the issue cannot be resolved, then technicians have access to two grievance procedures:

1. Negotiated Grievance Procedure, or
2. Administrative Grievance Procedure.



NEGOTIATED GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Negotiated Grievance procedure is for employees in the bargaining unit represented by the Association of Civilian Technicians (ACT). This procedure is the exclusive method of grievance resolution for all bargaining unit technicians.

As a technician, you have a right to request labor organization representation in the grievance procedure or to decline such representation. If you decline representation, the waiver must be in writing. The labor organization will be given an opportunity to have a representative present during all grievance proceedings.

The type of grievance you can file is covered in the current negotiated agreement in the mandatory grievance article.

This procedure has multiple steps with time limits for each step, and can result in binding arbitration.

ADMINISTRATIVE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The purpose of the Administrative Grievance Procedure is to provide a fair, equitable, and timely forum for internal review and resolution of disputes on employment-related matters arising among non-bargaining technicians within the Georgia National Guard.

The Administrative Grievance Procedure covers matters of personal concern or dissatisfaction of an employee, the consideration of which is not covered by other systems for The Adjutant General's review, and the resolution of which cannot be made at the normal supervisory level. Inclusions are defined in HRR 771, Section 1.3, and exclusions are outlined in HRR 771, Section 1.4.

The objective is to ensure that an employee has the option of resolving grievances, may act in his/her own behalf, or may select a representative, subject to conflict of interest requirements.

Reference HRR 771

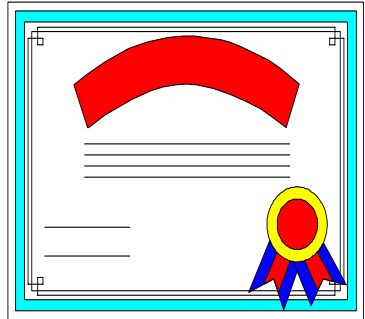
EEO COMPLAINTS – See Equal Employment Opportunity.



EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

INCENTIVES

The Incentive Awards Program is designed to improve operations and services. Its purpose is to motivate increased productivity and creativity by recognizing employees whose job performance and/or adopted ideas benefit the agency and are substantially above normal job requirements and performance standards. You may earn an award for your high level performance, a suggestion, an invention, or a special act or service, as long as it benefits the government and is outside your normal job responsibilities; or, if within your job responsibilities, it is of such high quality that an award is warranted. These awards may be made to an individual technician or shared by a group.



CASH AWARDS

Sustained Superior Performance (SSP) or a one time special act or service may be recognized with a cash award. This is a single payment that does not change your rate of pay.

QUALITY STEP INCREASE

A Quality Step Increase (QSI), recognition in the form of a one-step increase in a technician's rate of basic pay, is available to technicians based on sustained high-quality performance that is expected to continue in the future. Technicians must receive an *Outstanding* summary rating to be eligible for a quality step increase.

TIME-OFF AWARDS

This award grants an excused absence to a technician without charge to leave or loss of pay. Time-off awards are intended to increase productivity and creativity by rewarding contributions to the quality, efficiency, or economy of government operations. A full-time technician may be awarded up to eighty hours of time off during a leave year. The amount of time off that may be awarded to part-time or intermittent technicians is based on the average number of hours worked.

ON-THE-SPOT CASH AWARDS

This award grants a cash payment of \$50 to \$500 per instance (for a maximum of \$1,000 per year) to a technician who has exhibited superior performance during a particular function or activity and does not have to correspond with the annual appraisal. On-the-spot cash awards are intended to increase productivity and creativity by rewarding contributions to the quality, efficiency, or economy of government operations.

HONORARY AWARDS

These include awards such as the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service, the Department of Defense Distinguished Civilian Service Award, the Meritorious Civilian Service Award, and certificates of achievement, plaques, etc.

SUGGESTION AWARDS

These awards are given to technicians who provide suggestions to improve the economy, efficiency, or effectiveness of Federal government operations, which have been adopted by the agency. Suggestion awards may be a monetary or non-monetary award.

LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARDS

Technicians are awarded certificates and pins as they reach milestones of Federal service (5-year increments after 10 years creditable service).

Reference HRR 451, 5CFR, Part 451 and NGB TPR 451



Highlights

- Leave is earned according to length of service.
- Only full-time and part-time technicians earn leave.
- In some cases, leave may be used in advance.
- Technicians may transfer unused annual leave to other eligible technicians.

There are several types of leave that may be granted to a technician. Below are descriptions of the most common. Use of leave must be approved by your supervisor. Submit your request to use leave in advance whenever possible.



ANNUAL LEAVE

As an employee of the Federal government, you are eligible for authorized absences from work without loss of pay for vacations, maternity/paternity reasons, and other emergency or personal situations. Except in emergencies, you must obtain your supervisor's approval so that your leave time and work responsibilities are coordinated to ensure orderly office operations and completion of assignments. Technicians accrue annual leave as follows:

Full-time Technicians

Years of Service	Annual Leave per Pay Period
Less than 3 years	4 hours
3 years but less than 15 years	6 hours
15 years or more	8 hours

Part-time Technicians

Years of Service	Annual Leave per Pay Period
Less than 3 years	1 hour for each 20 hours in pay
3 years but less than 15 years	1 hour for each 13 hours in pay
15 years or more	1 hour for each 10 hours in pay

Note: *If you work on an intermittent schedule, or if you are serving on a temporary appointment of less than 90 days, you do not earn leave.*

A technician may accumulate and accrue no more than 240 hours of annual leave to the end of the leave year. There are exceptional circumstances where a technician may be allowed to carry over to the next leave year annual leave in excess of 240 hours; however, if all hours over 240 are not used, they will be lost (use-or-lose). If a technician has more than 240 hours of annual leave accrued at the end of the leave year, he/she may grant the excess annual leave to fellow employees under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program.

SICK LEAVE



If you are a full-time technician, you earn four hours of sick leave each pay period. If you work part-time, you earn one hour of sick leave for each 20 hours in pay status. If you work on an intermittent schedule, you do not earn sick leave.

The following conditions warrant the use of sick leave:

- Medical, dental, or optical treatments or examinations
- Incapacitation for the performance of duties due to sickness, injury, or pregnancy and confinement
- Exposure to contagious diseases that may jeopardize the health of co-workers
- See also Family Friendly and Medical Leave Act provisions for the use of sick leave to care for family members

If you are absent because of illness, you **must** notify your supervisor within two hours after the beginning of your scheduled work shift. Every effort should be made to personally contact a responsible supervisory official and avoid leaving voice mails or other messages. You should request sick leave for medical, dental, and optical examinations and treatments, and, to the extent possible, in all other medical related necessities. Technicians may be required to furnish a medical certificate to support sick leave for absences in excess of 3 consecutive workdays. Medical certificates may be requested in other cases at the discretion of the employee's supervisor.

ADVANCED LEAVE

Under certain circumstances, you may be granted annual or sick leave hours before you have actually earned them. Annual leave can be advanced up to the amount you can be expected to accrue by the end of the leave year, or, if you are retiring or separating from federal service, the amount you will earn prior to the anticipated date of retirement or date of separation.

Advanced sick leave may be granted up to and including the amount of sick leave which you can be expected to accrue in a leave year or the number of hours of pay contained in the retirement fund, whichever is greater. Requests for advanced leave must be made to your supervisor who will advise you of applicable procedures to follow.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Based upon your written request, you may, at the discretion of the agency, be granted approved absence from duty without pay. Leave without pay (LWOP) may be approved for such purposes as pursuing training beneficial to the agency, recovering from illness or disability, or sustaining your technician status and benefits pending actions of disability retirement claims or injury compensation. LWOP may be granted whether or not you have annual or sick leave to your credit.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE (EXCUSED ABSENCE)

An excused absence is absence from duty, administratively approved, without loss of pay and without charge to leave. This absence may be granted in limited circumstances, which are directly related to the mission of the National Guard, is related to a natural disaster or inclement weather, or which involve activities officially sanctioned by the National Guard. Examples include registration, voting, and blood donation (one-half day), certain conferences and conventions, jury duty etc.

MILITARY LEAVE

Employees who perform active military duty may request paid military leave, as specified in 5 U.S.C 6323(a). Under the law, an eligible full-time employee accrues 120 hours of military leave each fiscal year. In addition, an employee may carry over up to 120 hours of unused military leave from one fiscal year to the next, for a maximum military leave benefit of 240 hours in a fiscal year. Any unused military leave in excess of 240 hours will be forfeited at the beginning of the next fiscal year. Employees who elect to use military leave will receive full compensation from their civilian position for each hour charged to military leave, in addition to their military pay for the same period.

ADDITIONAL MILITARY LEAVE

Employees who perform active military duty may be granted an additional 22 days of military leave under 5 U.S.C. 6323 (b) if such leave is granted for the purpose of providing military aid to assist domestic civilian authorities to enforce the law or protect life and property or for contingency operations. Employees who perform active military duty may also be granted 44 days military leave under 5 U.S.C. 6323 (d) if such leave is granted for the purpose of participating in operations outside the United States, its territories and possessions.

Note: Neither the 22-day provision nor the 44-day provision are dual compensation!

COMPENSATORY TIME

The National Guard Technician Act prohibits overtime pay. However, you may be granted compensatory time for hours worked in excess of 80 hrs in a pay period. The amount of time off given is equal to the time you spent in overtime or irregularly scheduled work. In order to be compensated for overtime work, you must receive your supervisor's approval before performing such work. Compensatory time must be used within 26 pay periods from the pay period in which it was earned (not all technicians are eligible to earn compensatory time - contact your supervisor).

Remember! Unused compensatory time will drop-off after 26 pay periods – Even in a LWOP-Mil (deployment) status!

COURT LEAVE

A technician who is summoned as a witness on behalf of the Federal government, the Georgia National Guard, or a state or local government, or to serve as a juror is entitled to court leave without loss of pay. A technician who is summoned to appear as a witness on behalf of a private party in a judicial proceeding is not authorized court leave.



FUNERAL LEAVE

There are a number of situations in which an excused absence is appropriate in connection with an eligible technician's attendance at or participation in a funeral (also see family friendly leave on page 53):

- To make arrangements for an immediate relative who died as a result of a wound, disease, or injury incurred while serving as a member of the armed forces in a combat zone;

- Technicians may participate in funeral honors for a member of the armed services in accordance with the current NGB Funeral Honors Policy. Technicians must be in an active duty status and take appropriate leave. The current NGB policy allows for excused absence (administrative leave, compensatory time, or annual leave, etc.) for Funeral Honors duty. See HRO/ERS for restrictions and details.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Your agency has established procedures for emergency dismissal or closure. Your supervisor can advise you if your position is considered *essential* for early dismissal and leave purposes. Check with your supervisor for appropriate instructions.

LAW ENFORCEMENT LEAVE

Law Enforcement Leave is available to National Guard technicians for 22 work days in a calendar year for the purpose of providing military aid to enforce the law or assist civil authorities. This leave will not be charged to annual or military leave. Technicians may elect to use annual leave, compensatory time, or LWOP before using this leave.

MATERNITY LEAVE

Female technicians may charge absence for maternity reasons to a combination of sick leave, annual leave, and LWOP. You may use sick leave when you are actually unable to perform the duties of your job as a result of your pregnancy and while you are recovering from childbirth. Additional time off must be requested and approved as either annual leave or LWOP.

VOLUNTARY LEAVE TRANSFER PROGRAM

This program provides the opportunity to donate unused accrued annual leave to another technician who is experiencing a personal or family medical emergency and has exhausted his/her available leave. If you wish to donate leave or apply to become a leave recipient, contact your supervisor or HRO/ERS.

FAMILY FRIENDLY LEAVE

This law permits the use of up to 104 hours (13 days) of sick leave each leave year to care for a family member or to arrange for or attend the funeral of a family member. Full-time employees may use 40 hours (5 days) of sick leave for these purposes without regard to their current sick leave balance. An additional 64 hours (8 days) may be used if the employee maintains a balance of at least 80 hours of sick leave in his or her sick leave account. **Certain restrictions may apply, please contact HRO/ERS for details.**

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

This law permits use of paid or unpaid leave (limited to 12 administrative work weeks in a 12-month period) for the birth and care (or adoption) of a child; the care of a close family member with serious health condition; or a serious health condition of the technician that makes him/her unable to perform the essential functions of the position and is recently expanded to include accompanying children on routine medical visits or for essential school-related educational functions. The law permits additional sick leave in certain cases, **Contact HRO/ERS for eligibility and details.** Situations where this leave may be used, if qualified, include the following:

- Necessity to provide care and attendance to a family member
- Necessity to arrange or attend the funeral of a family member
- Participation in activities relating to the adoption or foster care of a child
- Participation in routine medical care appointments or essential school activities for dependent children (up to 24 hrs).

The employee must provide notice of his or her intent to take family and medical leave not less than 30 days before leave is to begin or as soon as is practicable.

Employees are required to furnish medical certification for Family and Medical Leave taken to care for an employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition or for the serious health condition of the employee. Certain restrictions may apply, please contact HRO/ERS.

ABSENT WITHOUT LEAVE (AWOL)

If you are absent from work without authorized leave (approved by your supervisor), you are **Absent Without Leave (AWOL)** and in a non-pay status. An AWOL charge may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from employment.

Reference HRR 630, 5 CFR, Part 630



Pay is based on the grade of the job assigned and the pay scale for that job. Basically, there are Wage Grade (WG) jobs and General Schedule (GS) jobs, and the pay scales for each of these is up-dated annually. Generally, technicians are paid at an hourly rate, derived from the pay schedule for the job to which they are assigned. There are some instances, however, in which a different hourly rate may be used.



PAY ADMINISTRATION

Generally, technicians are paid at an hourly rate, derived from the pay schedule for the job to which they are assigned. There are instances, however, in which a different hourly rate may be used.

PAY DAYS AND DIRECT DEPOSIT: Paydays are every other Thursday for Army Guard technicians and every other Friday for Air Guard technicians. Full-time technicians are required to have their checks directly deposited to a financial institution.

EARNINGS STATEMENTS: A Department of Defense *Civilian Leave and Earnings Statement* is mailed to each technician's home every pay period. The statement shows current and year-to-date earnings and deductions, TSP contributions, and leave balances.

Technicians should review each earnings statement and assure calculations and accruals are correct. If there is an error or question about information, such as incorrect earnings, leave accumulation, taxes or other listings; you should contact your supervisor immediately for assistance and correction.

SPECIAL PAY RATES

NIGHT DIFFERENTIAL PAY: Night differential rates are paid to both FWS (WS, WL, WG) and GS technicians.

FWS technicians are paid a 7½ percent differential when the majority of the hours of the scheduled shift are between 1500 and 2400 hours. A 10 percent differential is paid when the majority of the hours of the scheduled shift are between 1300 and 0800 hours. The differential is paid for all hours of the shift.

GS technicians are paid night differential of 10 percent for all hours scheduled after 1800 and before 0600 hours. The differential is paid only for the hours worked in this time span and not for the entire shift.

5 CFR 532.505, 5 CFR 550.122

ENVIRONMENTAL DIFFERENTIAL PAY: WG technicians exposed to various degrees of hazard, physical hardship or other unusual working conditions in the performance of their duties may be authorized Environmental Differential Pay (EDP) in accordance with established regulations. Requests for determination of eligibility for EDP are submitted to the HRO Classification Specialist.



5 CFR 532.511

HAZARDOUS DUTY PAY: GS employees may be paid hazardous duty pay (HDP) only for a duty included in official listings of irregular or intermittent hazardous duties involving physical hardship. A differential may not be paid to a technician for duty listed when the duty has been credited in the classification of the technician's position. Requests for hazardous duty pay are submitted through supervisory channels to HRO for approval.

WITHIN-GRADE INCREASES

Within-Grade Increases (WGI's) are given at the following periods for employees with a current performance appraisal equivalent to *Fully Satisfactory or above*:

Within-Grade Increase Chart:

GS

Steps 2/3/4	52 Weeks Each
Steps 5/6/7	104 Weeks Each
Steps 8/9/10	156 Weeks Each

WG

Step 2	26 Weeks
Step 3	78 Weeks
Step 4	104 Weeks
Step 5	104 Weeks

“MY PAY” Website



The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) created a website to manage many aspects of both dual-status (military) and civilian member's pay information. This year (2005) it is mandatory that W-2 information must be downloaded and printed from this website. If you do not already have a user ID and password for MyPay you can log-on to the website to request one. The web address for MyPay is:

<https://mypay.dfas.mil>

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Highlights

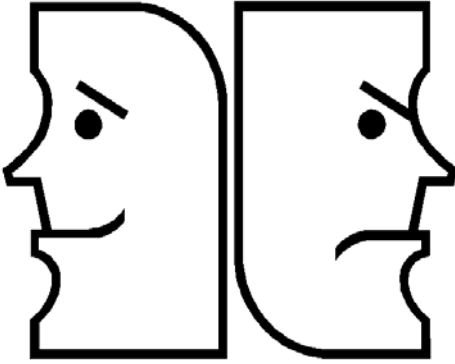
- Your supervisor will rate your performance at least once every year.
- Your supervisor will provide you with feedback one or more times per year.
- Your appraisal cycle is based on your birthday.
- You only qualify for a within-grade or step increase if you receive a Fully Successful or above summary rating.
- You may be eligible to receive an award if you receive a rating of Exceeds Fully Successful or above on the critical elements of your job.
- A performance-based action may be taken against you if your performance is unacceptable in any critical element.

PERFORMANCE PLANS

Performance plans consist of elements and standards. *Elements* define what kind of work you will be expected to perform, and the *standards* describe how well you must perform to meet certain levels of expectation. The performance plan defines critical and non-critical elements for your job. A *critical* element is defined as a component of a position consisting of one or more duties and responsibilities which contributes toward accomplishing organizational goals, and is of such importance that unacceptable performance in that element would result in unacceptable performance in the position. Job standards are defined for each element. You should receive a copy of your performance plan no later than 30 days after placement in a position.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

At least once every year, your supervisor will rate your performance on the job. You must have been under performance elements and



standards for at least 120 days to receive a rating. The rating period for a technician begins the first day of the month following his/her birth month and ends the last day of the birth month.

You may only qualify for a within-grade or step increase if you receive a summary rating of *Fully Successful* or better. You may be eligible for an incentive award if you receive a rating of *Exceeds Fully Successful* or better.

PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK

Employees can expect formal performance feedback sessions from their supervisor a minimum of semi-annually. New employees should generally receive feedback sessions a minimum of quarterly. These feedback sessions give the supervisor and the employee a chance to comment on job performance to date and may be used as supporting documentation for the final appraisal. Consult HRR 430, HRO/ERS, or HRO/LRS for more details.

UNACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE

At any time during the appraisal cycle that a technician's performance is determined to be unacceptable in one or more critical elements, that technician will be notified of which elements are not being performed acceptably and the level of performance that must be attained to demonstrate acceptable performance. The technician will be given a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) and a reasonable period of time (approximately 45 to 90 days) to show acceptable performance.

Once the technician has been afforded a reasonable opportunity to demonstrate acceptable performance, the agency may propose a reduction in grade or a removal action if performance is still at an unacceptable level.

Note: Performance standards should be developed by the supervisor and the technician together. If there is any disagreement concerning the performance plan, the supervisor is responsible for making the final determination.

Reference HRR 430, 5 FR, Part 430 and Part 432

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REDUCTION IN FORCE

A Reduction-In-Force (RIF) occurs when an agency is obliged to demote, separate, or furlough one or more employees because of lack of work, shortage of funds, or reorganization. The cause may come from the action of Congress, the President, the Office of Management and Budget, or from decisions of the head of the agency or some official who has been authorized to make such decisions. Whatever the source, officials of the agency must decide what parts and programs to reduce and how to distribute the remaining resources.



Before a RIF is conducted, the agency must describe the organizational and geographic limits within which employees will compete with each other for retention of their jobs. This is called the *competitive area*. The second limit is by grade and occupation. This is called the *competitive level*.

Each competitive level consists of all positions in a competitive area in the same grade and series and similar enough in duties, qualification requirements, pay schedules, and working conditions so that the incumbent of one could successfully perform the critical elements of any other in the length of time it would take to orient any new but fully qualified employee.

The names of all employees in a competitive level are listed on a retention register in the order of their relative standing. Relative standing is based on tenure of employment, technician service date (TSD), service computation date (SCD), and performance appraisal scores given in accordance with HRR 430.

RIF regulations are very complex. The information provided here is intended to give you only the most basic understanding. Consult HRO for complete regulations.

TENURE OF EMPLOYMENT

Tenure of employment determines the employee's retention group. Tenure Group I include career employees who are not serving a probationary period. (Supervisory probationary periods do not affect an employee's retention group). Tenure Group II includes employees serving probationary periods or career-conditional employees. Tenure Group III includes temporary, term, and other non-status employees.

VETERAN'S PREFERENCE

Veteran's Preference does not apply to National Guard Technicians

Reference HRR 351 and NGB TPR 351



Highlights

- Report on-the-job accidents immediately by Filing CA-1.
- Report unsafe acts or unsafe working conditions.

Your safety and health are important to you and to the Georgia National Guard. You are encouraged to maintain a healthy diet and a personal physical fitness program, which will benefit you and the Guard. It is your responsibility to report for your periodic physical examinations and to actively participate in approved physical training programs.

Smoking, or any use of tobacco products, excessive use of alcohol, and obesity are medically proven to be harmful to your health. If you feel these conditions are affecting your personal health and well being, you are strongly encouraged to seek assistance.

On-the-job safety is another important part of your responsibilities as a technician. If you have an on-the-job accident, you should first notify your supervisor and obtain medical attention. To assure Workers' Compensation coverage, you and your supervisor must immediately file a CA-1 form on-line. This form is required by the Department of Labor's Office of Workers Compensation Programs (OWCP). Medical expenses are paid by OWCP. In the event you lose time from work due to an on-the-job accident, you may receive up to 45 days Continuation of Pay (COP). Form CA-16 is required for the authorization of medical treatment.



Fraudulent claims are investigated by Federal police from the Department of Labor and prosecuted in Federal courts by the U. S. Attorney's office.

On-the-job safety also requires you to immediately report to your supervisor any unsafe act or unsafe working condition. Unsafe working conditions include tripping hazards, unsafe electrical wires, spills, and/or other conditions that you consider unsafe.

Safety is a daily part of your job.

“No SMOKING” POLICY

Smoking has been declared a serious hazard to health, and the Environmental Protection Agency has confirmed “second hand smoke” to be a significant health risk; therefore, smoking is prohibited in ALL occupied buildings and work areas. This includes, but is not limited to, private offices, hallways, rest rooms, classrooms, break rooms, conference rooms, and entrances to buildings and facilities.



Smoking is also prohibited in ALL government vehicles and aircraft. If you are a smoker, please observe the “no smoking” rules. If you wish to quit, please contact EAP or our medical staff for assistance.

Smoking is also prohibited in ALL non-occupied buildings or work areas that share a ventilation system with an occupied building or work area.

Smoking is permitted only in designated areas during lunch periods and official break times. Official break times will be the same for smokers and non-smokers.

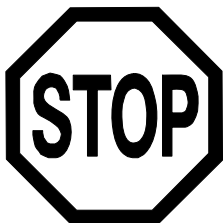


TRAVEL AND PER DIEM

When travel in connection with your duties is required, travel and per diem will be authorized in accordance with Department of Defense Joint Travel Regulations.

TRAVEL CARD USE

If you are required to travel, you are required to use a government credit card. This card may be used to obtain a cash advance (within per diem limits) from an ATM for travel and other travel expenses such as; airfare, motel, meals, etc.



Under no circumstance should a government travel card be used for personal use. It is your responsibility to promptly pay your credit card bill. Disciplinary action may result from abuse or improper use of your government travel card.

You are required to furnish receipts for any official miscellaneous expenses over \$75. These receipts should be attached to your travel voucher claim.

SPLIT DISBURSEMENT

Upon completion of TDY travel, submit a travel voucher (DD Form 1351-2) to the appropriate reimbursement office, so that your claim is received within five days. When filling out the DD Form 1351-2, you are required to check the split-disbursement option and enter a split disbursement equal to the amount charged on your government travel card for the TDY travel. If you need assistance in completing your voucher, ask your supervisor. A correctly completed voucher will assist the Comptroller Travel and Voucher Section in promptly processing your claim.

Reference DOD JTR

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	Association of Civilian Technicians
AL	Annual Leave
ATM	Automated Teller Machine
AWOL	Absence With Out Leave
AWS	Alternate Work Schedule
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CMP	Comprehensive Medical Plan
COLA	Cost of Living Allowance
COP	Continuation of Pay
CSRS	Civil Service Retirement System
DOD	Department of Defense
DOWD	Director of Workforce Development
EDS	Employee Development Specialist
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
ERS	Employee Relations Specialist
FEGLI	Federal Employees Group Life Insurance
FEHB	Federal Employees Health Benefits Program
FICA	Federal Insurance Contributions Act (Social Security)
FERS	Federal Employees Retirement System
GOV	Government Owned Vehicle
GS	General Schedule (pay)
GTR	Government Travel Regulations
HMO	Health Maintenance Organization
HRO	Human Resources Office
HRR	Human Resources Regulations
IDP	Individual Development Plan
IRA	Individual Retirement Account
JTR	Joint Travel Regulations
KSA	Knowledge, Skills and Abilities
LRS	Labor Relations Specialist
LWOP	Leave Without Pay
ML	Military Leave
OASDI	Old-Age Survivors and Disability Insurance
OPF	Official Personnel File
OPM	U. S. Office of Personnel Management
OWCPC	Office of Workers Compensation Program
PIP	Performance Improvement Plan
PL	Public Law
QSI	Quality Step Increase
RIF	Reduction-in-Force
SCD	Service Computation Date
SEEM	State Equal Employment Manager
SL	Sick Leave
SSN	Social Security Number
TAP	Technician Assistance Program
TDY	Temporary Duty
TSP	Thrift Savings Plan
WG	Wage Grade (hourly pay)
WGI	Within-Grade Increase

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DOWD/HRO POINTS OF CONTACT:



Administration: COMM: (678) 569-6420 DSN: 338-6420
 FAX: COMM: (678) 569-6262 DSN: 338-6262

Office Symbol	Extension
Director of Workforce Development (DOWD)	6022
Human Resources Officer (HRO)	6421
Deputy HRO (D-HRO)	6440
Labor Relations Specialist (LRS)	6433
Employee Relations Specialist (ERS)	6419
Employee Development Specialist (EDS)	6418
Personnel Classification Specialist (PCS)	6427
Personnel Staffing Specialist (PSS)	6425
Personnel Systems Manager (PSM)	6408
Active Guard/Reserve Manager (AGR)	6750
State Equal Employment Manager (SEEM)	6430
State Personnel Office (SPO)	6045
Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)	6455
Family Readiness Office	6454

Georgia DoD Human Resources Office Website:

<http://www.gahro.com/index.htm>

The GA DoD Human Resources Office homepage provides an on-line source for job listings, regulations, policies, handbooks, HR specialist's pages, and other human resources links and points of contact.

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